

The syntactic representation of ADDRESSEE – evidence from *wh*-drop in Berlin German

Introduction Many German dialects possess a type of *wh*-question called *wh*-drop, where the *wh*-phrase is missing. *wh*-drop is illustrated in (1) with an example from Berlin German, the variety of German spoken in Berlin and parts of Brandenburg and the empirical focus of this talk.

- (1) *Machst=n du da?*
make you there
'What are you doing there?'

What little literature exists on *wh*-drop in German (Bayer 2010, Pankau 2020) agrees that the missing *wh*-phrase is deleted in SpecCP and that this deletion operation is licensed through some additional syntactic mechanism. In this talk, I first argue that the missing *wh*-phrase is not elided in SpecCP but in a position that it reached by clause bound A'-movement. Second, I argue that A'-movement to SpecCP is blocked because SpecCP is already occupied by an operator encoding the addressee.

Background on *wh*-drop Despite the little research on *wh*-drop, core properties have already been established: (i) *wh*-drop requires the 2P clitic *n*; (ii) *wh*-drop is restricted to main clauses; (iii) *wh*-drop is impossible with [+anim] *wh*-phrases, cf. (2-4); ' _ ' marks the base position of the missing *wh*-phrase.

- (2) *Machst*(=n) du da _?* (3) **Ick frach m'r, du=n da _ machst.*
make=N you there I ask me you=N there make
'What are you doing there?' 'I wonder what you're doing there.'

- (4) *Is=n dit _?*
is=N that
OK 'What is that?' / * 'Who is that?'

The first and the second property are ultimately connected because *n* is banned from embedded clauses quite generally. The exact nature of *n* and its obligatory presence in *wh*-drop is debated. For Bayer (2010), *n* is a *wh*-agreement morpheme, for Pankau (2020), *n* is a pragmatic marker indicating true questionhood. Since this aspect is orthogonal to the data reported here, I leave it out here and gloss *n* simply as N. As for the third property, it is usually claimed that only *was* 'what' can be dropped. For Berlin German, the set of droppable *wh*-phrases is much broader and also includes the R-pronoun *wo* 'what', the locative *wo* 'where', *wie* 'how' and *wann* 'when', as the examples in (5-8) illustrate.

- (5) *Hast=n du dè _für engagiert?* (6) *Soll=s=n _ hinjehn?*
have=N you you for engaged should=it=N go to
'What do you engage in?' 'Where do you want to go to?'
- (7) *Jeht=s=n dir heute _?* (8) *Jeht=s=n _ los?*
goes=it=N you today goes=it=N loose
'How do you feel today?' 'When does it start?'

Clause bound A'-movement in *wh*-drop In the literature on *wh*-drop in German, it is assumed that *wh*-drop targets a *wh*-phrase moved to SpecCP. Since movement to SpecCP in German is not clause bound, this analysis predicts that *wh*-drop should be fine with a *wh*-phrase from an embedded clause. However, as (9) shows, this is impossible.

- (9) **Gloobst=n du, dass=w'r _ hinfahren?*
believe=N you that=we go to
'Where do you think we're going?'

At the same time, there is evidence that *wh*-drop involves A'-movement and not *in situ* ellipsis. First, *wh*-drop is fine with parasitic gaps, cf. (10), which are known to require overt A'-movement.

- (10) *Hast=n du, ohne _pg jekaut zu haben, glei wieder _ ausjespuckt?*
have=N you without chewed to have soon again spit out
'What did you spit out immediately without having chewed?'

Second, although R-pronoun *wo*'s are licit in *wh*-drop, not all are. Witness the contrast in (11).

- (11) a. *Ham=s=n dè _bei erwischt?* b. **Kämpfst=n du _jehng?*
have=they=N you at caught fight=N you against
'What did they catch you at?' 'What do you fight against?'

The difference is that *bei* 'at' allows movement of its R-pronoun *wo*, whereas *jehng* 'against' does not,

cf. (12). In other words, only those R-pronoun *wo*'s are licit in *wh*-drop that can be A'-moved at all.

- (12) a. *Wo_i ham=s=n dè t_i bei erwischt?* b. **Wo kämpfst=n du t_i jehng?*
 where have=they=N you at caught where fight=N you against
 'What did they catch you at?' 'What do you fight against?'

wh-drop is addressee directed What has gone unnoticed so far is that there are also pragmatic constraints on *wh*-drop. First, *wh*-drop is fine with some, but not all interjections, as shown in (13).

- (13) *ⁱ Verdammt / ⁱ Ey / ?? Scheiße / *Mist / *Häh, machst=n du da _?*
 damn hey shit shit what? make=N you there
 'Damn/hey/shit/what?, what are you doing there?'

Second, *wh*-drop is very strange in reported indirect speech, as shown in (14).

- (14) **Frach=n ma, will=r=n da _ machen?*
 ask=him PRT want=he=N there make
 'Ask him, what's he planning to do there?'

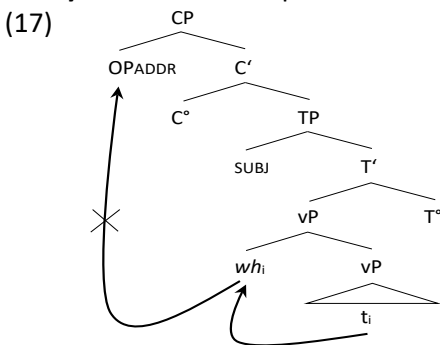
What unites these two cases is the generalization in (15).

- (15) *wh-drop is licit only when directed toward the addressee of the current discourse*

The first restriction is covered because those interjections that are fine in *wh*-drop also allow vocatives, that is, they are directed toward an addressee, whereas those that don't are impossible with vocatives, that is, they are not directed toward an addressee, cf. (16). The second restriction is covered because the addressee of the reported question is not the addressee of the current discourse.

- (16) *ⁱ Verdammt Peter! / ⁱ Ey Peter! / ?? Scheiße Peter! / *Mist Peter! / *Häh? Peter!*
 'ⁱ Damn Peter! / ⁱ Hey Peter! / * Shit Peter! / * What? Peter!'

Analysis In order to capture the observed syntactic and pragmatic restrictions, I assume that *wh*-drop



results from the failure of A'-movement to SpecCP, because SpecCP is already occupied, as shown in (17). The element occupying SpecCP is an operator encoding the addressee, OPADDR. I assume that the A'-movement taking place in *wh*-drop is scrambling. Scrambling in German is clause bound, is possible with *wh*-phrases (Wiltschko 1997), and licenses parasitic gaps (Webelhuth 1992). The *wh*-phrase is then deleted in that position. Regarding the recoverability of the *wh*-phrase, I follow Bayer (2010) and Pankau (2020) that this is due the 2P clitic *n* and the [-anim] status of the *wh*-phrase.

Consequences This analysis not only supports the idea that pragmatic roles such as SPEAKER and ADDRESSEE are syntactically represented (Speas & Tenny 2003, Zanuttini 2008, Portner et al. 2019), it also allows one to explain another novel observation on *wh*-drop. Consider first the following example.

- (18) *Jetzt weeßt=de, dass=de uffpassen musst.*
 now know=you that=you take care must
 'Now you_{ADDR} know that ^{OK}you_{ADDR} / *you_{GEN} have to take care.'

What (18) shows is that within a sentence the interpretation of *you* cannot shift from ADDRESSEE to generic *you*. Importantly, the same effect is observed in *wh*-drop, as example (19) shows.

- (19) Discussing with my friend John a problem he faces at work, I say: "Let's think,
 a. *kannst=de=n da _ machen?"* b. *wat_i kannst=de=n da t_i machen?"*
 can=you=N there make what can=you=N there make
 'What can ^{OK}you_{John} / *you_{GEN} do now?' 'What can ^{OK}you_{John} / ^{OK}you_{GEN} do now?'

The exclusion of the generic reading of *you* in (19a) follows from the presence of the addressee operator and the principle operative in (18): the meaning of *you* cannot shift in a sentence. In (19b), however, no operator is present, A'-movement of *wat* 'what' is not blocked, and *you* can be ambiguous.

Bayer, Josef. 2010. *Wh*-drop and recoverability. In: Zwart, Jan-Wouter & Mark de Vries (eds.), *Structure Preserved*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 31-40. • Pankau, Andreas. 2020. The question particle *enn* in Thuringian and its implications for the analysis of *wh*-drop. In: Speyer, Augustin & Julia Hertel (eds.), *Syntax aus Saarbrücker Sicht 3*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 255-280. • Portner, Paul, Miok Pak, & Raffaella Zanuttini. 2019. The speaker-addressee relation at the syntax-semantics interface. *Language* 95(1): 1-36. • Speas, Peggy, & Carol Tenny. 2003. Configurational properties of point of view roles. In: Anna-Maria Di Sciullo (ed.), *Asymmetry in Grammar*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 315-345. • Webelhuth, Gert. 1992. *Principles and Parameters of Syntactic Saturation*. Oxford: OUP. • Wiltschko, Martina. 1997. Scrambling, D-linking and Superiority in German. *GAGL* 41, 107-142. • Zanuttini, Raffaella. 2008. Encoding the addressee in syntax: evidence from English imperative subjects. *NLLT* 26(1): 185-218.